

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM
Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Held June 1, 2015

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, June 1, 2015 at Saranac Lake Free Library, 109 Main Street, Saranac Lake, New York, by Charles “Kip” Thompson, President. Kip thanked Peter Bensen, Director of Saranac Lake Free Library, for hosting this meeting in their spacious Thomas B. Cantwell Community Room.

In lieu of Roll Call, Kip Thompson asked everyone, going around the room, to introduce themselves and state their affiliation with Saranac Lake Free Library or the System.

Present: Gary Alexander James “Jim” Bennett, Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Fran Filshie, Donna Fulkerson, Dorothy Latta, Thomas “Tom” Mandeville, Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Rita Quinn, Barbara Stowe and Kip Thompson

Excused: Emily Castine and Wallace “Wally” Day

Staff Present: Ewa Jankowska, Executive Director; Dawn Recore, Administrative Assistant; and Michael Spofford, Principal Account Clerk

Others Present: Peter Bensen, Director of Saranac Lake Free Library, and Margaret Worden, Trustee of Saranac Lake Free Library

Oath of Office – Trustee

Kip Thompson, President, administered the Oath of Office to Thomas Mandeville as a Trustee of the Board.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Excused Absences

Approval of Agenda – As distributed prior to this meeting (later removed from Consent Agenda so it could be amended to include under **Old Business - Ratification of Union Contract**)

Approval of Minutes of April 27, 2015 Meeting

Committee Reports - Advocacy, Development, Executive, Health Plan, Negotiating, Nominating, Personnel, Property and Strategic Planning Committees have no reports at this time.

CEFDA Report

Communications

Approval of Consent Agenda

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of Consent Agenda, seconded by Nicky Bryant. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports

Lisa Minnich motioned that the following financial reports be approved as presented by Michael Spofford, Principal Account Clerk, seconded by Nicky Bryant.

- Preliminary Over and Under Report for period ending April 2015
- Budget-to-Date Report as of 4/30/15
- Balance Sheet as of 4/30/15
- Revenues vs. Expenses Comparison for April 2014 – April 2015 & YTD 2014-2015
- Grants/Non-Current Aids Status Report as of 4/30/15

Michael Spofford stated that things are going well. As of April 2015, Plattsburgh Public Library is working on cleaning up some old New York State aids. They are spending about \$100,000 on nonfiction books and e-books to bring this account up-to-date. We are also working with OverDrive to clear up that account.

Michael pointed out that in the Revenues vs. Expenses Comparison, there are a few large changes.

- Under *Other Incomes between April 1 and 14 of 2014*, we received a large grant from Clinton County Tobacco Settlement, so 2014 shows a much larger revenue than in April 2015.
- Under *Expenses*, there are three or four accounts with notable increases.
 - Library Materials have increased 81 percent, with much of that being e-books and regular nonfiction books that are being purchased with CBA funds.
 - *Supplies* increased 121 percent in April due to the purchase of an Apple laptop computer which was part of the grant.
 - *Member Library Purchases* is negative due to the purchase of the movie licensing for member libraries for which CEFLS will be reimbursed.
 - *Maintenance & Repairs* show a 68 percent increase due to some plumbing repairs and the purchase of a new dehumidifier for the basement.
 - *Miscellaneous* shows a 44 percent increase due to hiring a temporary staff person for four hours per day for 12 weeks to help cover the duties of the Library Clerk who resigned in March.

Kip commented that under *Revenues vs. Expenses Comparison*, for the first four months we spent about \$23,000 less than last year. The net between revenues and expenditures is \$184,000 less than it was at the same time a year ago which reflects that our State aids, of which we had received a portion in the first four months of 2014, haven't come in at all so far this year, so we are using up the accumulated working capital.

Michael commented that CEFLS has a line of credit that we may have to use.

Barbara Stowe inquired about insurance. Michael responded that we have been working with the insurance agent to investigate whether some insurance items are being double insured and we will likely end up with a credit.

Motion carried unanimously to approve the financial reports as presented.

Public Comment

Peter Bensen expressed that after the meeting he would be happy to show anyone around and respond to any questions.

At Margaret Worden's inquiry about Tobacco Settlement Money, Ewa Jankowska responded that it is a kind of grant fund that Clinton County has because of the Tobacco Settlement. She further explained that CEFLS has a circulation and cataloging system, called Horizon, that member libraries use. CEFLS applied for this grant because all of the servers were outdated and no longer covered by warranty. In lieu of paying over \$40,000 for new servers, we opted to move Horizon to the cloud service provided by North Country Library System, and their IT department now maintains the system. CEFLS still maintains and updates Horizon catalog and the circulation system, but does it remotely via the Internet. We received about \$16,000 from the Clinton County grant for that move and are very grateful. Now our one IT person, who is a librarian, can really concentrate on maintaining the catalog and training member libraries how to use the system rather than attending to outdated hardware.

President's Remarks

Kip Thompson commented on the following topics.

A Finance Committee meeting was held prior to this meeting. Kip is concerned about the narrowness of the financial support for the System and the enormous dependency on NYS. Since the 2008 recession, CEFLS has had to cut back on staff and services. He is wondering if member libraries could contribute more to the System through billing them for services provided in return for us helping them to become stronger financially. That in turn would help them with their fundraising.

The controversial issue of the Board doing their own fund raising, over time, to get into the business of funding CEFLS was suggested.

Ewa Jankowska stated that we are very limited in our ability to charge libraries. We do charge to reimburse our costs for Horizon, the catalog and circulation system, and recently it was voted to increase the fees by five percent for each of the next three years. For most libraries, the increase is about \$50, and more for bigger libraries. She has learned from colleagues from other systems, some of whom get a lot more money from libraries that systems are not allowed to charge libraries for what they call "basic services", which are delineated in our Plan of Service. The systems that can charge libraries are providing additional services, such as at Ramapo Catskill Library System, where they provide a whole WI-FI network. Ewa believes that some of our member libraries are in very hard financial situations that would make it difficult for them to pay for additional services. She feels that at this point, we should focus on advocating for more money from the counties and the state. Currently, we pay SirsiDynix, the vendor for Horizon, a yearly licensing fee and \$6,000 to North Country Library System for cloud services but the plan is to have a portion cover the salary for our IT librarian, Betsy Brooks.

Ewa stated that last year we had a literary luncheon for which we were barely able to cover expenses, but if we were to start doing that type of event on a yearly basis, maybe slowly they could evolve into fundraisers.

Jim Bennett suggested turning to various alternate sources to augment the budget. Ewa reminded the Board that Julie Wever writes grants and we do get money from various foundations. Further, she stated that CEFLS is seriously understaffed, plus people do not understand what we do as a System. It is easier to understand what a library is because it is a public building where people can come and get services. To address this, we are getting out into the public more. We will be at the Mayor's Cup in Plattsburgh, and Ewa is going to make a presentation in Lake Placid this week at AM Rotary. As

people become more familiar, maybe we can get a foundation of at least Friends of the System, or we could call it Friends of the Libraries.

Kip stated that at the meetings of one of the not-for-profits to which he belongs, the last item on the agenda is the question *what are we doing right?* or *what do we need to do differently?* This kind of discussion looks to the future, and pays attention to things seen as areas of weakness to be repaired or done differently. In the future, Kip might use these questions as agenda items.

Dorothy Latta inquired whether we have any affiliation with the Adirondack Trust Foundation. Ewa responded that Kip wanted CEFLS to invest some money in it which we, as a public institution, cannot really do. However CEFLS does work closely with Cali Brooks, especially with construction grants when libraries can get matching funds for technology related projects. In the future, we may do some programs with ADK Trust Foundation.

Tom Mandeville asked if it would be a conflict of interest for trustees to start a foundation. Lisa Minnich responded that she doesn't think so, as they are not employees of the System so there would be no benefit to them personally. Kip concurred that it would be good to begin asking questions but he is not sure that we can have a foundation with trustees only and it would have to be somewhat independent. Nicky Bryant named some of the steps that would have to be taken to become a corporation, with Jim Bennett adding that we would want to tap revenue streams other than what member libraries use.

Director's Report

In addition to her written report, Ewa Jankowska reported on the following topics:

Interviews have been conducted from the Civil Service list for the Library Clerk position vacated when Chad Chase resigned. David Fuller, a former page from Plattsburgh Public Library, who has a Bachelor Degree in English and now works at a computer game store has been hired. In addition to the regular duties of packing and unpacking of books, with another portion being creative. She hopes that he can do a lot of Facebook presence and teach people at libraries how to use e-books and other online resources.

Last Friday we had a very good grant writing workshop, funded by Lake Placid Education Foundation, with Kara Page as the presenter. She is in charge of writing grants for The Wild Center. In the future, CEFLS may do some interesting projects with her to link museums and libraries.

PULISDO is organizing a conference at the end of July for systems' directors. There will be sessions focusing on IT and outreach, so Betsy Brooks and Julie Wever will be attending with Ewa.

Ewa and Jesse Feiler, the president of the Board of Plattsburgh Public Library, have been discussing the Library Trustees Association yearly meeting on May 16 and 17, 2016 that will be held in Plattsburgh. She would like very much to have all CEFLS trustees attend. CEFLS will be doing a presentation on something that we do that other systems may want to adapt for their use. Ewa will be meeting next week to discuss this with Jesse and Tim Gavin, the Director of LTA.

There is a lot of frenzy among library directors over the Governor's Efficiency Plan that some libraries have been told they have to file. Libraries that have portions of their budgets put to public votes, either on the school or municipal ballots, were sent letters directing them to file an Efficiency Plan for saving one percent of whatever was voted on. Ewa spoke with the State Library and they

were not able to offer an explanation. The idea behind it, as far as she understands, is that the government wants different entities to join together to save money by sharing services. As a library system, we are already doing that but it is not allowed for libraries to give that as an example because the money that they save is the state's money. Ewa is going to meet with Dan Stec and Janet Duprey to ask if there is any way libraries can be excluded from this plan.

Plattsburgh Public Library (PPL) Report

There was no report from Plattsburgh Public Library.

Amend the Agenda

Lisa Minnich motioned to remove approval of today's Agenda from Consent Agenda, seconded by Nicky Bryant. Motion carried unanimously. Tom Mandeville motioned to add to the Agenda under Old Business, the Ratification of the Union Contract, seconded by Lisa Minnich. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Lisa Minnich recapped, for the full Board, the Finance Committee meeting which was held earlier today. Topics discussed were ways to strengthen the finances of the System and the idea of having a fund balance, Capital Fund, or fund of that type. Things that the System needs to upgrade right now are: phone system, roof replacement (consideration but not needed right now), repaving driveway, and filling in the tunnel between the CEFLS and Central Library buildings. The tunnel is in poor repair and passes under the driveway. It is not used but if not taken care of, it will eventually collapse. At the current time, there is basically about \$100,000 in construction funds that could be put to use, which would include a matching funds grant from the State. There are also funds that could be moved around if necessary but that could create issues until we receive our State aid. As in the past, we would prefer to avoid borrowing money.

A priority is to have the System's property surveyed because there are no up-to-date markers to show the boundaries between CEFLS, PPL and 56 Brinkerhoff Street. There is a fence between the three locations in disrepair due to having snow pushed against it by city workers as they plow a pass down our driveway. There is also a line of very tall trees with branches that fall from time to time. Last year a car parked behind PPL was totaled when a tree branch fell on it. The owner of 56 Brinkerhoff Street has said that we or PPL (the city) can cut the overhanging branches, so we need to find out where the boundary lines are. From an old map, it looks like CEFLS's property is "L" shaped, extending almost half way behind PPL. Michael will be contacting the County for a new map.

Michael Spofford and Ewa Jankowska recounted that 5 or 6 years ago when the Board was talking about filling in the tunnel it was going to cost \$5,000 or \$6,000 and involved using concrete and some kind of foam. Dorothy Latta suggested that there may be road crews who are ripping up roads or sidewalks to be redone and for free they might dump the fill into the tunnel.

Old Business

Discussion and approval of Purchasing Policy

Trustees received the proposed Purchasing Policy for review prior to this meeting. Ewa explained that there is only a small change from the old Policy. It would allow the CEFLS staff to go over the \$2,000 spending limit in cases of previously approved grant purchases.

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of the Purchasing Policy as amended, seconded by Rita Quinn. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

Discussion and approval of policy on CEFLS Board of Trustees' Sunshine Funds

A proposal for use of Sunshine Funds was submitted by Emily Castine and distributed for review prior to this meeting. Kip suggested that the Board's Sunshine Fund be the funding source for the coffee that this Board consumes. He motioned approval of the proposal as drafted by Emily Castine, with a subparagraph added that the staff will use these funds to purchase refreshments for meetings held at CEFLS, seconded by Barbara Stowe. Rita Quinn mentioned that the last line in the proposal designating the individual to handle the account should not be included in the policy, although it will be the Principal Account Clerk. Discussion ensued regarding the paragraph that leads, "In order for this fund..." and it was decided that it should also be eliminated as it is process, not policy. The motion to approve the policy was then amended by Nicky Bryant to exclude the last two paragraphs as it was written, seconded by Kip Thompson. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the Automation Contract

Ewa stated that the newly amended Automation Contract is based upon the old Automation Contract with a few changes: new increases in automation fees that were previously approved by the Board, mutual insurance coverage is no longer needed, and there is reference made to "cloud" service provided by North Country Library System which replaces the "Central Site" definition, which has replaced servers. A cover letter will be sent to the libraries with the contract to explain the changes. Gary Alexander motioned approval of the Automation Contract, seconded by Rita Quinn. Motion carried unanimously.

Ratification of Union Contract

Ewa Jankowska explained that the one change the attorneys made to the Union Contract is the implementation of increases within 14 days instead of 21 days. Several trustees stated that they had not seen the ratification and because its approval was not on the Agenda they did not feel well-informed, so it will be sent to them by e-mail tomorrow morning and by U.S. Postal Service to those who so request. Tom Mandeville motioned that the old contract and the changes to that document which were circulated earlier, including the raises, changes to insurance contributions, and a few other minor changes, and if no one has any problems with it, the vote today ratifying it will stand seven days from now. Motion seconded by Rita Quinn. Motion carried, with Donna Fulkerson and Fran Filshie abstaining.

New Business

Approval of Individuals, Entities and Institutions with Whom to Conduct Business in 2015

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of Individuals, Entities and Institutions with Whom to Conduct Business in 2015, seconded by Donna Fulkerson. Michael pointed out that the two changes on the form are the addition of Armsden Landscaping as the lawn care provider and Martindale Keysor & Company as the auditor. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the trustees, Kip Thompson adjourned the meeting at 5:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Alexander
Secretary